



The President's Daily Brief

22 February 1972

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

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PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Soviet news media are casting President Nixon's visit in an unfavorable light, but no authoritative editorial comment has yet appeared. (Page 1)

UN envoy Jarring is visiting Near Eastern capitals on his way back to New York from Moscow; his stop in Cairo may have included discussion of his joining in "proximity talks" with the Israelis. (Page 2)

The Greek Government appears to be looking for a way of saving face for its failure to move against President Makarios. (Page 3)

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USSR-US-CHINA

The Soviets are using their news media to cast President Nixon's visit to China in an unfavorable light, but they have not as yet made any authoritative editorial comment. The most common Soviet theme is that the visit is an example of Chinese perfidy on Vietnam. By taking this line, the Soviets clearly hope to score points against Peking in Moscow's struggle with China for the support of Hanoi and other "progressives."

In playing up the Vietnam angle, the Soviets have primarily used selective quotes from the foreign press, noting stepped-up US bombing in Vietnam and China's absence from the recent "Versailles assembly" on Vietnam during the President's visit. Branching out from the Vietnam aspect, Pravda on 22 February quoted the French Communist Party organ L'Humanite to the effect that the President's visit is intended to extract benefits from the Chinese leaders' anti-Sovietism and will have "pernicious consequences" for the struggle in Indochina. The Communist Party newspaper also reported remarks from the CPUSA congress characterizing the trip as being predicated on common hatred for the Soviet Union.

Reporting on the specifics of the visit has been fairly straightforward. Pravda, without elaboration, carried TASS reports that the President was met by Chou En-lai and that he held a "serious and frank" discussion with Mao Tse-tung. Moscow television also carried brief scenes of the President's arrival but, like Pravda, juxtaposed the reporting with the highly critical L'Humanite item.

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UN - MIDDLE EAST

UN envoy Jarring is making a tour of Near Eastern capitals on his way back to New York from Moscow. He spent three days in Cairo over the weekend and then flew to his nominal headquarters in Cyprus for talks with the Israeli ambassador there. King Husayn has told Ambassador Brown that Jarring has agreed to come to Amman on Wednesday, and Tel Aviv has announced he will visit Israel on Friday.

Some Egyptian officials have indicated an interest in the US proposal for "proximity talks," but only if Jarring plays a role. The weekend visit provided an opportunity for Cairo to sound out Jarring on his plans and the possibility of his participation in such talks. Although Jarring apparently is willing, the Israelis almost certainly would oppose his participation.

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NOTES

Cyprus: The Greek Government appears to be looking for a way of saving face for its failure to move against President Makarios. Foreign Minister Palamas has warned in a press conference against "foreign intervention," and [redacted] Athens is blaming the US for frustrating Greek plans. [redacted]

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[redacted] The semiannual rotation of Turkish troops scheduled for 23 February appears set to go off without complications.

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Laos: Preliminary field reporting indicates that one of Vang Pao's task forces operating south of the Plaine des Jarres abandoned its positions and pulled back following a heavy North Vietnamese shelling attack on the night of 21 February. This task force had been targeted against enemy 130-mm. field gun positions on the southern edge of the Plaine. The other three task forces south and east of the Plaine report no enemy contact during the same period.

Cuba: [redacted]

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